

ORGANIZATIONAL WORK INSTRUCTION

HS50

DELEGATED EXAMINING PROCEDURES

**APPROVING
AUTHORITY**

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DOCUMENT HISTORY LOG

Status (Baseline/ Revision/ Canceled)	Document Revision	Effective Date	Description
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Revision	A	4/28/06	Updated Sections 3 and 9 to reflect required format and information, per HS01-OWI-001.
Revision	B	09/22/06	Various clerical changes
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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Work Instruction is to establish a standard operating procedure for the Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) operated by the Human Resources Services Office for the Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC). The provisions of this procedure apply to all MSFC DEU operations, regardless of the location of the vacancy.

2. APPLICABILITY

This procedure describes procedures to be used by the Human Resources Services Office's Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) when conducting delegated examining for competitive service positions under authority delegated to NASA by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 1104. This directive does not apply to the filling of vacancies through the internal merit promotion procedures described in the NASA Competitive Placement Plan, [See: HS50-OWI-003, Staffing and Internal Placement.]

3. AUTHORITY AND APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

3.1 Authority Documents

- 3.1.1 The Delegated Examining Operations Handbook issued by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) serves as the primary procedure for Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) operations conducted by MSFC. Most procedural and operational issues are fully addressed in the OPM Handbook. This OWI and NASA STARS HR Users Guide provides additional guidance on areas of local discretion and areas not fully addressed in the primary guidelines.
- 3.1.2 NASA STARS HR Users Guide

3.2 Applicable Documents

- 3.2.1 NPR 1441.1 NASA Records Retention Schedule

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4. DEFINITIONS

See Glossary in Delegated Examining Operations Handbook.

5. INSTRUCTIONS

The Human Resources Services Office shall conduct Delegated Examining in accordance with the Interagency Delegated Examining Agreement (NASA 1) between OPM and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. All operations of the DEU shall be conducted by or with oversight of specialists with current OPM DEU certifications.

The Human Resources Services Office shall use case examining procedures as described in Part D.

The DEU Operations Handbook and the following detailed operating procedures shall be used in operating the Delegated Examining Unit.

PART A - Initiating the Examining Process
PART B - Public Notice and Recruitment
PART C - Accepting Applications and Adjudicating
Veterans' Preference
PART D - Rating and Ranking Candidates
PART E - Certification and Auditing Procedures
PART F - Conducting Internal Reviews
PART G - Miscellaneous Information and Instructions

6. NOTES

None

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7. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

None

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - ACTION CODES FOR DEU CERTIFICATES

8.2 Appendix 2 - NASA STARS Checklist

9. RECORDS

Record Type: Vacancy announcement, certificate of eligibles, selectee and associated notes are maintained in NASA STARS

Responsible Party: Staffing Specialist
Location: Agency NASA STARS Database

Records Retention Schedule: Data maintained in accordance with NPR 1441.1 NASA Records Retention Schedule (AFS 3300, Item 12) Files shall be destroyed 2 years after annual break and retained for a total of 3 years. Files involved with litigation are retained indefinitely.

Record Type: Signed certificate of eligibles
Responsible Party: Human Resources Specialist
Location: Office of Human Capital Central file room (bldg. 4200, room 354)

Records Retention Schedule: Data maintained in accordance with NPR 1441.1 NASA Records Retention Schedule (AFS 3300, Item 12) Files shall be destroyed 2 years after annual break and retained for a total of 3 years. Files involved with litigation are retained indefinitely.

Record Type: Annual DEU self assessment report
Responsible Party: Staffing Specialist
Location: Employee Services and Operations Office
Records Retention Schedule: Data maintained in accordance with NPR 1441.1 NASA Records Retention Schedule (AFS 3292, Item 10) - destroy 3 years after the date of the report. Years from the issuance date, destroy when two years old.

10. TOOLS, EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

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Federal Personnel Processing System
NASA STARS
Recruitment One-Stop

11. PERSONNEL TRAINING

- 11.1 Current Delegated Examining Unit Certification is required by personnel performing or overseeing DEU operations.

12. FLOW DIAGRAM

None

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PART A
INITIATING THE EXAMINING PROCESS

1. Hiring Options Available. For each vacancy, a decision shall be made as to whether a competitive process, such as delegated examining, shall be used or whether an internal placement process such as merit promotion, reinstatement, or transfer authority would be most appropriate.
2. If a decision is made to announce a position under both merit promotion and delegated examining procedures, simultaneously, status candidates shall only be considered under merit promotion.
3. Request for Referral of Eligibles. Once a decision has been made to use the delegated examining process, the organization with the vacancy provides an electronic Request for Personnel Action (Standard Form 52) through the Federal Personnel and Payroll System (FPPS0, a position description documenting the significant facts about the job to be filled, and a synopsis of the major duties for the announcement. A review is made to ensure that the request contains all the information necessary to issue an announcement. The official Case File shall be available electronically through NASA STARS, NASA's STaffing and Recruiting System.
4. Temporary and Term Appointments. Delegated examining authority shall be used to fill Temporary and Term positions if appropriate.
5. Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP). When vacancies are to be filled using the delegated examining process, special referral/selection priority is given to eligible well-qualified surplus or displaced employees for vacancies in the local commuting area. Well-qualified CTAP and ICTAP candidates are those who are rated in the top level of the rating and ranking procedure.

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6. There is no provision for filing an objection to a CTAP or ICTAP eligible.

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PART B
PUBLIC NOTICE AND RECRUITMENT

1. The Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC) has implemented an automated applicant referral system, NASA STARS. Those positions announced using Delegated Examining procedures are listed in the USAJOBS government-wide automated employment information system at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>. The normal open period for competitive announcements is 5 - 10 workdays. Any open period of less than 5 days requires documentation.

2. Announcement numbers are automatically assigned by NASA STARS. The following is an example:

```

MS   Marshall Space Flight Center
06   Fiscal Year
D    One letter indicating type of announcement:
      D - Delegated Examining
      C - Competitive Placement
      B - Both DE and CPP (combined announcement)
      N - Notice (Reassignment Bulletin)
      H - Direct Hire
      G - Distinguished Scholar
      S - Senior Executive Service (SES)
0001 Sequential numbers beginning with 0001
      Example: MS06D0001

```

3. Minimum Requirements for Vacancy Announcements Provided to Database
 - a. Title, series, pay plan, grade, and potential;
 - b. Duty location;
 - c. Opening and closing dates, plus any other information dealing with how application receipt shall be controlled, such as the use of early cut-off dates;
 - d. Name of issuing office and announcement number;
 - e. Qualification requirements;
 - f. Who may apply (generally, any U.S. citizen may apply unless the position is restricted to veterans and/or CTAP/ICTAP eligibles);

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- g. Types of appointments: permanent, term (including conversion eligibility and not-to-exceed date), temporary (including not-to-exceed date).
 - h. Salary range;
 - i. Brief description of duties;
 - j. Basis of rating;
 - k. What to file;
 - l. Instructions on how to apply;
 - m. Equal employment opportunity statement;
 - n. Reasonable accommodation statement;
 - o. Information about filing as a CTAP/ICTAP eligible, including the definition of "well-qualified"; and
 - p. Additional items when appropriate (i.e., number of vacancies).
4. The NASA STARS Process Guide contains current instructions on accessing and using the automated Vacancy Announcement Builder.
 5. The Federal Jobs Database shall be updated any time an announcement is modified (closing date, cancellation, etc.)
 6. A variety of recruiting tools are available under delegated examining authority which shall be used in support of hiring goals. These include:
 - a. Paid advertising
 - b. Special Internet-based Recruiting Websites
 - c. Recruiting support from other Federal agencies
 - d. Recruitment bonuses
 - e. College campus visits
 - f. Enhanced benefits under the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004 and the Federal-wide Recruitment, Relocation and Retention Incentives.
 7. Paid advertising requires special approval from the Human Resources Services Office Manager and the management staff in the organization with the vacancy. Arrangements shall be made in advance to assure adequate

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funds are available and can be used for paid
advertising.

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PART C
ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS AND
ADJUDICATING VETERANS' PREFERENCE

1. Applicants normally apply electronically via NASA STARS, though mailed applications may also be received. Applicants are told that mailed applications or applications delivered in person will only be considered if they are received in the NASA's Resume Operations Center (ROC) by midnight CST on the closing date of the announcement.
2. Deadline extensions shall not be granted to applicants solely because they become aware of DEU announcements late in the open period. As applications are received, the applicant is mailed an acknowledgement of receipt.
3. Applications shall be rated based on the information furnished by the applicant.
4. If selected, the selectee shall be asked to provide any required supporting documentation within 5 work days of the employment offer.
5. Experience and education can only be credited up to the closing date of the announcement. Applicants still in college shall be rated provisionally eligible if they are expected to receive their degree within 9 months.
6. Veterans' preference shall be granted in accordance with OPM's Federal Employment Policy Handbook: Veterans and the Civil Service (VetGuide).
7. Applicants who apply for an announcement shall be notified by e-mail after vacancy is filled or announcement cancelled.
8. There are certain valid exceptions to the general rule prohibiting late applications. The exceptions are shown in Chapter 4 of the OPM DEU Manual. One of the exceptions is a 10-point veterans' preference eligible, who can file an application at any time for any position

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for which a non-temporary appointment has been made from a competitive list of eligibles in the preceding 3 years.

8. NASA STARS maintains a 10-point veterans' file. All unsolicited applications from 10-point veterans shall be accepted at any time. These applications shall be reviewed for each DEU vacancy to determine if any qualify.

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PART D
RATING AND RANKING CANDIDATES

1. Applicants shall be rated using NASA STARS. The NASA STARS (STaffing And Recruitment System) is an automated staffing and recruitment process that uses a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software system called Resumix and also uses NASA extensions to Resumix.
2. An applicant's request for reconsideration of an ineligible rating or numerical score shall be in writing.
3. Ratings shall be based solely on the information originally supplied in an application.
4. Upon receipt, a Staffing Specialist not previously involved in the referral processes shall do a complete review and prepare a written response to the applicant.
5. The Human Resources Services Office Deputy Manager or Manager shall review and sign or email the response. Because this process automatically constitutes a two-level review, the decision is final. There is no further appeal.
6. Normally, responses shall be sent to the applicant within 8 calendar days after receipt of the request.

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PART E
CERTIFICATION AND AUDITING PROCEDURES

1. After the rating and ranking process has been completed, an electronic register shall be established for the Case File. An electronic certificate is then created based on requirements in Chapter 6 of the Delegated Examining Handbook and issued through NASA STARS.
2. Eligible status candidates shall also be considered without competition and referred on a separate non-competitive referral list. The selecting official can select from either list.
3. The organization shall be asked to return the certificate by the date established by the issuing official.
4. Staffing Specialists are authorized to receive and act on requests for extension of the filing deadline.
5. Extension shall be granted by means of reissuance of the certificate.
6. Additional certificates shall be issued to fill identical vacancies (same title, series and grade) if the selection can be made within 90 days from the date the initial certificate was issued without reannouncing.
7. A selected candidate shall normally be appointed to the position within a reasonable amount of time (normally 30 days from the date of selection). However, delays in excess of 30 days shall be authorized to accommodate special situations, such as completion of education, a geographical move, obligations to current employers, temporary agency hiring restrictions, and processing of security clearances.

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8. Objections to candidates referred, based on factors such as qualifications, suitability, medical considerations, or proposals to pass over a preference eligible, are received from selecting officials in the form of an SF-62, Agency Request to pass over a Preference Eligible or Object to an eligible or other comparable documents with supporting documentation. The DEU Specialist who issued the certificate shall review the request and take action as indicated below:

- a) Objections based on Suitability or Medical Disqualification. The DEU Specialist shall prepare a packet (including all relevant information and a recommendation) for review by the Human Resources Services Office Manager.
- b) If the decision is to sustain the request, the Staffing Specialist shall prepare the documentation to send to OPM for review and final approval.
- c) Objections and pass over requests based on Qualifications. In the case of non-preference eligibles and preference eligibles less than 30% disabled, the DEU Specialist shall prepare a packet (including all relevant information and a recommendation) for review and approval by the Human Resources Services Office Manager.
- d) In the case of compensable preference eligibles with 30% or more disability, the DEU Specialist shall prepare documentation (including a cover letter signed by the Human Resources Services Office Manager) for submission to OPM.
- e) The compensable preference eligible shall be notified of the proposed pass over.
- f) This notification shall include name of agency, job title/series/grade, duty location, and certificate number; explanation of reasons for proposed Passover; and right to respond to those reasons to OPM within 15 days of the notice.

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- g) Appropriate follow-up action shall be based on OPM's decision.

IN ALL CASES LISTED ABOVE, THE SELECTING OFFICIAL SHALL HOLD A VACANCY FOR THE APPLICANT UNTIL THE OBJECTION OR PASS OVER REQUEST IS SUSTAINED BY THE Human Resources Services Office MANAGER OR OPM.

NOTE: Before initiating action on an objection or pass over request, the DEU Specialist shall carefully review the certificate to determine whether a formal objection/pass over action is necessary. In many cases, the candidate can simply be reported as "not selected."

9. When a certificate is returned, it shall be audited to make sure the selection is in order.
10. If actions on the returned list are not correct or there is an illegal appointment, the certificate shall be immediately returned to the organization for correction.
11. As a minimum an audit of the certificate shall consist of Checking to ensure that the following things have been done:
 - a) "Rule of Three" is followed. The method for breaking tied scores is documented in the Requisition Notes in NASA STARS. A veteran has not been passed over and a non-veteran selected unless an objection based on qualifications is approved by the Employee Service and Operation Office Manager or an objection based on suitability or medical disqualification has been approved by OPM. An objection based on qualifications of a 10-pt veteran that has a compensable disability at 30% or more has been approved by OPM.
 - b) Correct report action codes are on the certificate by each eligible's name. See Appendix 1.
 - c) Entered on Duty (EOD) date of selectee is provided on the certificate.

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- d) Records of declination and failure to reply are provided and properly documented on certificate and NASA STARS.
 - e) Certificate is returned by suspense date or extension date (extension was granted and properly documented).
 - f) If certificate is not used, reason is provided in Notes on the Requisition in NASA STARS.
 - g) The returned copy of the Certificate of Eligibles shall be signed and dated by the selecting official. When the audit is completed, the person auditing the certificate shall sign and date the report copy and file in a consolidated folder.
8. NASA STARS Checklist (Appendix 2) shall be used by all personnel involved with the action from initiation of the requisition and announcement to audit of the certificate to ensure that all documentation required by NASA STARS and OPM has been completed.

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PART F
CONDUCTING INTERNAL REVIEWS

1. An audit of delegated examining activities using staff not associated with delegated examining activities shall be done annually.
2. MSFC shall certify completion of the audit to OPM and shall maintain a list of all discrepancies and corrective actions for a period of three years after the audit.
3. A current MSFC employee or employees from another NASA Center who is not involved with delegated examining activities at MSFC, but is currently certified in delegated examining, shall perform the audit.
4. Certification to OPM that the audit has been completed shall be accomplished at the time the Quarterly Workload Report is prepared (Item 13 on the form).
5. NASA STARS Checklist (Appendix 2) shall be used by the auditor. This checklist consists of the points to be covered when conducting an internal review.
7. The checklist is a "working document" and shall be filed in Work Folders, when maintained; however, the official document of record is the Requisition Notes documented by the auditor in NASA STARS. (See Appendix 2, Phase 5, of the NASA STARS Checklist.)
8. The Human Resources Services Office shall maintain a list of all discrepancies and corrective actions for a period of three years or until an OPM review.

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PART G
MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

1. The Delegated Examining staff shall be trained and certified by the Office of Personnel Management.
2. Delegated Examining staff members shall notify their supervisor when they, a family member, or a member of his/her household intends to apply for a Delegated Examining announcement.
3. In accordance with the DEU Handbook, the Delegated Examining Unit staff shall provide Quarterly Workload Reports to the servicing OPM Service Center. Quarterly reports are due 15 workdays after the end of the quarter (i.e., January 15, April 15, July 15, October 15). The workload reporting form and instructions for completing are in Appendix M of the DEU Operations Handbook.

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APPENDIX 1

ACTION CODES FOR DEU CERTIFICATES

1. DA - Declined Agency
2. DD - Declined until a Later Date - Can remove the candidate temporarily until date provided. Shall be available in 6 months.
3. DG - Declined Grade
4. DL - Declined Location
5. DP - Declined for the Position Certified Only
6. DX - Declined Further Consideration for Federal Employment
7. A - Selected
8. CR - CRU - Communication Returned Unclaimed
9. FR - Failed to Reply - Failure to respond to e-mail is acceptable provided the person sending the e-mail documents with a copy of the e-mail and a signature that the person did not respond. Shall also be used for anyone selected who fails to report.
10. CE - Career or Career-Conditional Employee
11. TE - Temporary (or Indefinite) Employee
12. NC - Appointed by Non-Competitive Action
13. NS - Not Selected

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APPENDIX 2 NASA STARS Checklist

Requisition Number: _____

Title, Series and Grade: _____

Phase One - Building the Announcement, Requisition and Resume Search

- ☐ Reason for less than 5-day announcement documented in Requisition Notes
- ☐ Duties in announcement contains major job requirements and is not a repeat of position description
- ☐ Job analysis discussion documented in Requisition Notes
- ☐ Name of SME in Requisition Notes
- ☐ Manager notified by email of expected timeline to fill
- ☐ Announcement states that additional positions may be filled from the announcement
- ☐ Relocation expenses authorization/non-authorization in announcement
- ☐ Security investigation (if required) in announcement
- ☐ Drug testing (if required) in announcement
- ☐ Specialized experience and any selective placement factors clearly defined in announcement
- ☐ Email notice to NASA Communications when announcement posted
- ☐ Skills match major job requirements and are balanced
- ☐ Resume search has between 8 and 15 skills with at least 4 of the selected skills indicated as primary
- ☐ Selective/Required skills documented in Notes
- ☐ Custom fields completed for referral list
 - ☐ Manager Name
 - ☐ Organization Name
 - ☐ Position Title
- ☐ Custom fields completed for reports
 - ☐ Date SF-52 Received
 - ☐ Status
 - ☐ Announcement Number
 - ☐ Announcement Open Date/Status (2 entries)
 - ☐ Announcement Closing Date
 - ☐ Announcement Type

Date completed: _____

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Phase Two - Making Referred for Rating Decisions

- ☐ Initial tracking completed
- ☐ Checked RPL and documented in Notes
- ☐ 10 Pt Vet Report check documented in Notes
- ☐ Qualified 10 pt. Vets moved to tool

Date completed: _____

Phase Three - Creating Certificates

- ☐ Proper score order, type Delegated Examining/Competitive Placement Plan(DE/CP) and vet preference referral
- ☐ Referred applicants meet TIG, minimum qualifications and selective placement factors
- ☐ Appropriate tracking code used for all applicants.

Date completed: _____

Phase Four - Closing the Case

- ☐ Basis of rating documented in notes
- ☐ Final referral decision tracking completed
- ☐ Reasons for non-selection of veterans documented in Notes, if applicable
- ☐ Name request tiebreaker documented in Notes
- ☐ Date custom fields in Referral/Close File group completed in Resumix
 - ☐ *Date Referral List Returned*
 - ☐ *Date Referral List Audited*
- ☐ Offer letter sent
- ☐ Type and date of final notices to applicants documented
- ☐ Tracking data on selectee updated to Decision Accept
- ☐ Tracking data updated on declinations and reasons documented in Notes
- ☐ *Scheduled EOD* date and announcement number updated in selectee resume summary custom field
- ☐ Superior qualifications approval
- ☐ Transcript reviewed for positive education requirement
- ☐ Selectee made available in Resumix
- ☐ Date offer and announcement number documented in applicant summary file

Date completed: _____

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Phase Five - Independent Audit by Non-DEU Staff Member

- ☐ I have audited Announcement No. _____ and find that related certificate(s) have been properly and all documentation is in order.
- ☐ Requisition notes have been updated to include this notation and date of this independent audit.

Date completed: _____ Independent Auditor: _____

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